



TITLE: *BEREAVEMENT LEAVE POLICY*

Effective Date	10 May 2018	Version	02
Approved By	Management Board	Date Approved	09 May 2018
		Review Date	09 May 2021 <i>or as required</i>
Superseded or Obsolete Policy / Procedure(s)		Owner	
01 – <i>Bereavement Policy</i> (2011)		Human Resources	

1. Purpose of Policy

The *Bereavement Policy* provides information relating to Bereavement and Compassionate leave offered by Carlow College, St. Patrick's (hereinafter, Carlow College). Carlow College acknowledges whilst Bereavement / Compassionate leave are not statutory leave entitlements an employee will need time off to help cope with their loss and personal distress and for attending to the funeral arrangements as required. Therefore, the College provides this leave with pay on the death of an employee's immediate family member.

Carlow College will always respond in a way that properly acknowledges the loss, and will act sensitively and support the bereaved.

This Policy supersedes all previous policies and communications (including that within contracts of employment) regarding Bereavement and Compassionate Leave.

2. Definitions

Bereavement leave: special leave with pay which may be granted to an employee in the event of the death of a relative.

Compassionate leave: for the purposes of this policy refers to exceptional circumstances in the event of serious and unforeseen illness of an immediate relative, for example, where an employee's spouse is critically ill.

3. Scope of Policy

This Policy is applicable to all employees of Carlow College, St. Patrick's.

4. Policy Statement

Bereavement and Compassionate leave is a paid leave benefit offered by the College in the event of the death of an employee's family member, as identified within this policy.

Employees can avail of up to three days' bereavement leave and up to three days' compassionate leave as outlined within this policy and its subsequent practices and procedures.

The purpose of the leave is to provide employees the necessary time to attend to personal affairs, and grieve after the loss of a loved one. The purpose of this Policy is to bring together a common best practice approach from the existing practices within the organisation for all employees. A principal aspect of this Policy is to ensure that the relevant information reaches the right people and that, where necessary, employees are provided with appropriate support.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The Human Resources Responsibilities

Human Resources have the following responsibilities:

- The Human Resources Office holds responsibility for this policy and any subsequent practices and procedures thereafter.
- Human Resources in conjunction with Leave Administration and Payroll, will provide information, guidance and support to Line Managers and Staff.

6.2 Leave Administrator Responsibilities

Leave Administration have the following responsibilities:

- The Administration and processing of this Leave Policy will be managed by Leave Administration.
- Work collaboratively with Human Resources and payroll in ensuring that all information is up to date and correct.
- Ensure that both Line Managers and staff adhere to the process outlined in this Policy.
- Answer in collaboration with Human Resources, any process/procedure related queries from staff and Line Managers.

6.3 Line Manager Responsibilities

Line Managers have the following responsibilities:

- Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that both they and their staff understand the policy, its practices and procedures.
- Line Managers are required to adhere to this Policy and its procedures.
- Line Managers are required to consult and collaborate with Human Resources as defined within the practices and procedures of this Policy.
- Line Managers are required to notify Human Resources and Leave Administration of the absence of an employee due to bereavement or compassionate leave.
- Line Managers are to ensure that appropriate support is provided to employees where applicable.

6.4 Staff Responsibilities

All college staff members have the following responsibilities:

- All staff of Carlow College are responsible for ensuring that they understand and adhere to the Bereavement Leave policies and procedures.

- All staff should adhere to the reporting procedures outlined in this document.

7. Associated Documentation

- Appendix 1: Bereavement Leave: Practices and Procedures
- Appendix 1.1: Compassionate Leave Notification Form

8. Associated Policies

- *Annual Leave Policy*
- *Force Majeure Policy*

9. Monitoring and Review

The Policy will be formally reviewed on an annual basis by the HR Office to reflect any legislative/organisational changes. Staff will be informed through regular email communication and through the staff portal regarding any updates to same.

Appendix 1: Bereavement Leave: Practices and Procedures



Bereavement Leave: Practices and Procedures

1. Eligibility criteria for Bereavement Leave

Bereavement Leave (with pay)	On the death of an immediate family member
3 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spouse/Partner, daughter, son, parent, sister or brother, • Grandparent, grandchild, • Niece / nephew, • A child, adoptive child of the employee or a child being cared for on the basis of loco parentis
	Non-immediate family member
1 day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mother/father-in-law, • Uncle/aunt, • Son/daughter-in-law

- a) Employees may be granted leave of absence with pay of up to **three days**, in the event of the death of an immediate family member (spouse or civil partner, partner, parent, sister, brother, son, daughter, grandparent, grandchild, niece, nephew).
- b) Employees may be granted leave of absence with pay of one day, in the event of the death of a non-immediate family member (defined as mother/father-in-law, uncle/aunt, son/daughter-in-law).
- c) In the event of the death of a person not referred to above, and time-off is required by an employee; the College will consider an employee's request for **paid annual leave**, and ask that the existing Annual Leave procedure is utilised.
- d) Bereavement leave is granted only at the time of the bereavement. Bereavement leave cannot be substituted for any form of leave, other than annual leave for example, if the bereavement occurs when an employee is on annual leave, the annual leave may be replaced with bereavement leave and the annual leave restored at the discretion of the HR Office, having consulted with the relevant Line Manager.

2. Exceptional Circumstances and Compassionate Leave

In exceptional situations and circumstances, absence and payment in excess of the aforementioned number of days (as defined above) may be granted, subject to the approval of

the HR Office, having consulted with the relevant Line Manager. Please see point 4 below for further information.

3. Notification / Application for Bereavement Leave

- Whilst acknowledging the difficult circumstances with bereavement; as per our standard absence notification procedure, employees are requested to contact Leave Administration and your Line Manager as soon as possible, or at a minimum within half an hour of the normal starting time, on the first day of absence.
- Should Leave Administration be on leave, staff are required to contact Reception and their Line Manager within half an hour of the normal starting time on the first day of absence.
- This is to ensure that Line Managers and other colleagues can effectively address any immediate operational requirements.
- There is no necessity to complete a form for Bereavement Leave.
- Extended leave that falls out of the specified criteria must be communicated to Human Resources. This will be done in consultation with the Line Manager.

4. Notification / Application for Compassionate Leave

- a) Compassionate leave is additional leave offered by the College to staff members in a time of personal or family need, especially on the occasion of a death or critical illness of immediate family.
- b) In a case where an employee has to travel abroad to make funeral arrangements in respect of an immediate relative, special leave with pay in excess of the limits for bereavement leave (as defined above) may be granted at the discretion of the HR Office, having consulted with the relevant Line Manager.
- c) In exceptional circumstances in the event of serious and unforeseen illness of an immediate relative, for example, where a staff members spouse is critically ill, arrangements for compassionate leave may be made. In such circumstances compassionate leave shall not normally exceed three days and staff requesting compassionate leave should consider their annual leave entitlement.
- d) In the same way, an employee may be allowed leave of absence without pay in respect of occasional brief absences owing to reasonable causes, subject to the approval of the HR Office in consultation with the Line Manager.
- e) Compassionate Leave is not Force Majeure Leave; it is additional leave offered by the College.
- f) If a member of a staff member's close family dies, there is no entitlement to Force Majeure Leave.
- g) Requests for such leave should be made in writing to the HR Office and your Line Manager for approval, which will then be forwarded to Leave Administration for processing.

The College will consider an employee's request for certain periods of paid leave. Compassionate leave will be granted at the discretion of the organisation.

In the event of the death of a person not defined as an immediate or non-immediate family member, and time-off is required by an employee; the College will seriously consider an employee's request for paid annual leave, and ask that the existing Annual Leave procedure is utilised.

The College in the event of a colleague and /or a family relative of a colleague, where possible, (ensuring work commitments are covered), will support staff in attending the funeral. All requests to attend should be sought from your Line Manager in the first instance.

5. Compassionate Leave Notification Form

- a) Requests for such leave should be made using the Compassionate Leave Notification Form (Appendix 1.1) to the HR Office and your Line Manager for approval.
- b) Human Resources will then notify Payroll and Leave Administration for processing.

6. Support

Support and professional grief counselling is available to all employees if required. The Employee Assistance Programme and/or the Chaplaincy Service is available to employees in this regard.

7. Employee Assistance Programme

The EAP is provided by VHI Corporate Solutions. The EAP is a Confidential & Specialist Information and Counselling service and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. These services are also available for family members to avail of.

How can I access the EAP?

- You can free-phone 1800 995 955 or
- Email an enquiry to the specialist information service: eap@vhics.ie or
- Access the following link www.livewell.optum.com (username Vhicarlowcollege).

8. The Chaplaincy Service

Employees may also, if they wish, contact the organisations Chaplaincy Service for support 059 91 53245.

9. Queries

Any queries or requests in relation to Bereavement / Compassionate leave should be directed to your Line Manager in the first instance. For further information, / queries in relation to the above, you can contact the HR Office and/or Leave Administration on:

- hr@carlowcollege.ie
- T: 059 91 53 293
- ahayden@carlowcollege.ie
- T: 059 91 53251

Employees found to be abusing their entitlement under this policy may suffer loss of benefit under this scheme and /or will be subject to the organisations disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Appendix 1.1: Compassionate Leave Notification Form

Compassionate Leave Notification Form (Strictly Private and Confidential)			
<p>*In line with the Bereavement and Compassionate Leave Policy, all employees seeking compassionate leave, must submit a formal request. *Employees should complete all relevant sections in full ahead of submitting to their Line Managers and Human Resources.</p>			
Section 1: Compassionate Leave Request Information			
Employee Name:		Employee Department:	
Employee Manager:			
Category of Leave:	<i>Compassionate</i>		
Dates of Leave requesting? (Indicate date(s) here)			
Relationship to Employee (for e.g.			
Nature and details of request			
Section 2: Management Approval			
Manager Signature:		Date:	
Manager (PRINT):		Date:	
Section 3: HR Approval			
HR Signature:		Date:	
HR Name (PRINT):		Date:	
Section 4: Declaration			
<p>I declare that the information given by me above is true, accurate and complete in all respects and I both understand and accept that if that is not the case, whether knowingly on my part or otherwise, following due investigation by my employer, I may be denied Compassionate Leave and / or will be subject to the College's disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.</p>			
Employee Signature:		Date:	
Employee Name (PRINT):		Date:	